



Celebrating 40 Years

Four decades after the signing of the JBNQA, the Cree still protect their land



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Remembrance

by Will Nicholls

It has been 40 years since the James Bay and Northern Quebec Agreement (JBNQA) was signed. I remember those days, which had a vast influence over how Cree economics, politics and culture have developed to this day. Something precious was taken from us that wounded the spirit but made us stronger in the end. Even when the beaver were threatened by over-trapping by non-Cree in the 1930s, the Cree along with the Hudson's Bay Company saved them for the future wellbeing of the people and the land.

This time, however, the land itself was threatened by a massive hydroelectric project that we dubbed the white man's biggest wet dream, and they called La Grande. It was massive in scale and would flood thousands of square kilometres of Eeyou Istchee. The Cree fought the construction of the dams in the courts. Initially we won but within a week, without new testimony, the decision was overturned and negotiations started.

During the court case many of the Cree and Inuit had never been in a city. One incident had a few Inuit pulled out of the court to answer questions. It seems they kept some food fresher by immersing it in water. They had used the bathtub to keep a seal carcass fresh. The poor cleaning lady nearly had a heart attack and called the police. The Inuit were confused as they didn't understand what the fuss was about.

During the negotiations leading to the JBNQA, a Hydro-Québec spokesperson came to Mistissini to explain the project to the people. At one point everyone

started laughing, confusing the man. It was explained that when he was describing the millions of kilowatts the dam would produce all the translator could say in Cree was "and lots and lots and lots and lots," as there wasn't a number in Cree that high at that time.

To me, these examples showed the differences and difficulties between Aboriginal and mainstream cultures. They still exist to this day to a great extent and eventually must be overcome. The connection to the land is strong for any Cree and the extent of it mystifies non-Natives. It was the La Grande experience that led to a real desire to understand mainstream societies that fuelled higher education among my generation. No more would we be fully dependent on others to explain what was happening and to fight our battles. The fight against the Great Whale hydroelectric project showed how much we learned. It was Cree leading the way and gathering allies across the world.

The JBNQA, through which we regained a measure of control over our future, made this possible. I honour the leadership for their foresight and work – work that continues to this day. Every Cree who has played a leadership role has contributed. Their work comprises the foundation we have and will continue to build upon.

Look at what we have compared to other First Nations in Canada, and realize that 40 years of achievements were built upon the JBNQA and the treaties and agreements that followed. Be proud and know you are strong enough to overcome the challenges now before us.

Contents

EDITORIAL

Remembrance 3

REZ NOTES

Of spies and men 4

NEWS

All talk, no action? 5

Chisasibi assembly on wildlife and habitat 7

FEATURES

Celebrating 40 Years 10

Band-aid solutions 19

Award-winning Native electrician 21

For everyone on your list 24

UTNS

What the federal election means for First Nations 34



photos by
Ignatius La Rusic

Of spies and men

by Sonny Orr



A lot has happened since the last time I checked out the social climate of the world. In a whirlwind month of November, Friday the 13th became a day known worldwide for terrorist attacks against the people and values of France. Terrorism has been going on for some time now and there seems to be no end in sight for the barrage of hatred, violence and terror – from people who desire to make your life one of dread, worry and insecurity. Distrust, hatred, anger, violence and loss of commonalities that bind people together seem to be what the current social climate reflects today.

Back in the day, veterans will recall that the wars in Europe started in much the same manner. An ideology grew into a reality, which grew into a social blight of perfectionism, which we all know cannot survive in the world's natural orders of life. Nothing can be perfect unless it can be appreciated as such, and fortunately the world didn't care for Hitler's version of perfectionism. Peace came with a heavy price and it has always been like this with warring nations. However, it is the recognition that war is useless when waged for social disregard to the global community via the Internet.

Then the Cold War turned us into paranoiacs who believed that the world would be blown into oblivion 30 times over if an equally paranoid world leader with the passwords to launch weapons of mass destruction just because he had a bad hair day.... I could go on, but I'm glad that now we don't have to worry about instant kablooeey or a drawn-out death through radiation exposure.

In my youth, we were told to watch out for Russian spies and submarines. Apparently the Hudson and James bays

aren't very good for listening for foreign submarines due to the contrasts of denser fresh water and lighter salt waters. This echo sonar system's signal would actually refract, just like a prism does to a ray of light, separating the visual wavelengths into the colours of the rainbow. This sonar refraction makes it ideal for Russian subs to cruise into the Hudson and James bays unseen.

My grandparents experienced this paranoia firsthand, via the radio broadcasts from the south. Towards the end of World War II, the able men were ready to board the sailboat to take them to war, when a radio announcement declared that the conflict was over and the small island of Fort George rejoiced that their men wouldn't be sent off to fight! Peace was nearly instant but the costs of the war had its toll on the economy right up until the early 1960s. The Cold War offered the first real feeling of fear for our people via the government-run radio networks on shortwave. Peace was now stable – except for the issue of pushing the red button – and everything was cool for a while.

One night, my grandmother went to check out her old house across the street. It was late evening and a flashlight was needed. My grandmother, with her little niece for backup, finished her look around and was ready to leave, when she felt a tug on her sleeve. At that very moment, her flashlight went out. She screamed for help and my grandfather came running. She screamed that the Russian spy had her, but it turned out to be nothing more than the nail used to tie the door shut had caught her sweater sleeve. Hopefully, we can return to this imaginary fear level, instead of this real threat that hovers around us today.

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All talk, no action?

Mistissini business owner says development conference produced no plans

by Joel Barde

The Eeyou-Eenou Economic Development Conference brought together business people and government workers to discuss ways to improve economic prospects in Eeyou Istchee. But one businessperson who attended the November 10-11 event at the Neoskweskau Sports Complex in Mistissini came away disappointed.

Calvin Blacksmith, the owner-operator of Cree Source for Sports in Mistissini, said the two-day conference should have been more action-oriented.

"I feel like at the end of a conference, you are supposed to have a plan of action," said Blacksmith in a phone interview following the conference.

Blacksmith – who opened his store 14 years ago – thought the meeting should have ended with a briefing to assure participants that their voices were heard and that

there are concrete plans to improve communities' economic situations.

For his part, Andy Baribeau, the director of the Department of Commerce and Industry for the

"We weren't pretentious enough to think that we would have an action plan and the solutions after a day and a half," Baribeau commented in response to the criticism. "But you

"But too often we are going outside when we could be going into our communities when it comes to purchasing things and accessing services."

Cree Nation Government, said that a report from the conference would likely be released in December. The event, which attracted 250 participants, was an opportunity to identify strategies to improve and diversify the economies of JBNQ Cree communities, he said.

can identify what the targets and priorities are. The long-term objective is to say, 'Hey, these are the priorities our business people and youth want', and to then to sit down with our communities and help them get to where they want to go."

Baribeau said basic financial literacy must be improved, which requires better communication and coordination between Cree institutions.

He also stressed the need for more independent small business. Too many Crees, said Baribeau, rely on government-related work.

"Those are nice steady jobs, and that's great," he said. "But too often we are going outside when we could be going into our communities when it comes to purchasing things and accessing services."

Blacksmith agrees that it's time for the Cree to build up their domestic economy. He laments that he has to travel to Val-d'Or or Chibougamau simply to get his vehicle serviced,



photos by Gaston Cooper



photos by Gaston Cooper

something that sucks up time and money and puts thousands of additional kilometres on his vehicle every year.

He says he would like to see a car dealership in one of the communities, which he thinks would do good business from domestic Cree business and contracts with Hydro-Québec. "I could sell a truck to anyone," he quipped.

Blacksmith feels that a dealership is an example of a project that would need to be a partnership between Grand Council and private investor/operators. The capital costs of getting it started would simply be too high otherwise. "The Grand Council is there to stimulate the economy and get our people to work," he said.

Blacksmith would also like to see a Cree answer to its housing crisis. He envisions a factory, owned and operated by Cree, to produce prefabricated housing that can be shipped to communities for assembly.

Blacksmith even questions the policy of alcohol prohibition. He says that the small town of Radisson, which sits close to Chisasibi, is essentially kept afloat because of alcohol sales to Crees.

A former police officer, Blacksmith says he has travelled to many reserves, and he says that ones that ban alcohol invariably have the most problems with it.

"If you treat your people like kids, they will always act like kids," said Blacksmith, adding that he'd like to see a pub open up in Chisasibi.

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Planning ahead

Chisasibi assembly looks at the future of wildlife and habitat in Eeyou Istchee

by Joshua Grant

A special assembly in Chisasibi November 3-5 discussed wildlife and habitat issues in the James Bay region and heard about the Cree Nation Government's vision for land use, marine habitat and protected areas in Eeyou Istchee.

Isaac Voyageur, Director of Environment and Remedial Works and Regional Environment Administrator, told *the Nation* that the assembly centred around three major goals. Land and sea use planning at both a community and regional scale and identifying the responsibilities of different government entities in these areas was the first priority; the second was research design and protocol planning on the same community and regional scale.

Finally, the assembly identified training capacities and potential partnerships with Cégeps and universities that could develop the

skills to protect wildlife and habitat in Eeyou Istchee.

"The assembly focused on wildlife and marine habitat," said Voyageur. "It was wide-ranging and covered a whole lot of issues, mainly raising awareness of the depletion of eelgrass and how that is affecting waterfowl populations in the coastal communities where people have noticed a significant decrease of geese. We brought in a number of experts and scientists to gather the knowledge and research that is out there."

Voyageur said that while inland and coastal communities brought different issues and environmental concerns to the table there was a sense of camaraderie and an understanding that the priorities of individual areas and communities are equally important.

"The most important thing that comes out of a meeting like

this is the realization that there's a willingness to come together to work for the betterment of the Cree Nation [as a whole]," Voyageur said. "It's a collaborative effort. Even if [a certain issue] doesn't impact communities directly they're all there to support their brothers."

Along with the concern over eelgrass depletion, another major issue brought forward by those from the inland communities is the disappearance of forest due to development and a perceived lack of focus on conservation in the last decade.

Voyageur says that the CNG has been working to respond to these concerns, noting that the Cree Nation Government established the Eeyou Protected Areas committee for this very purpose. This committee has representation from each Cree community



and is working directly with each area of Eeyou Istchee to see that they have the necessary resources.

"We've worked with all the communities and they've let us know what areas they would like to see protected," Voyageur explained. "We've advised them and offered our expertise, helped with mapping and helped identify key areas [that need protection]. We're now following up to take action.

"This [action] will hinge on what the communities see as the priority, we're not here to take over," Voyageur continued. "We're here to work with the communities and we're working under their direction. They spell out what they need and we provide them with the necessary assistance."

Voyageur mentioned that the Quebec and Canadian governments must ensure that the treaties and agreements in place are respected and enforced. He said that most relationships concerning wildlife and habitat are tied to the Eeyou Marine Region Land Claim Agreement, an off-shore agreement modeled on similar treaties in Nunavik and Nunavut that bring the governments together to address different issues.

"The idea is to have all communities working together," said Voyageur. "From our end at the CNG, we're committed towards strengthening Cree society and we've committed to include protected areas in that work. We need to defend critically endan-

gered habitat like the eelgrass, waterfalls and forest, and of course this requires input from the tallymen, land users and the Cree leadership."

Plans for the future include the creation of a Land Use Planning unit in Waskaganish, ongoing planning, research and workshops in collaboration with the communities of Eeyou Istchee and the development of an Eeyou Planning Commission (EPC) featuring a local commissioner from each community. The first EPC meeting is scheduled for early 2016.

"It's about forward thinking," Voyageur concluded. "We're looking beyond the next few years at how development will affect us and how we can start to address it now."



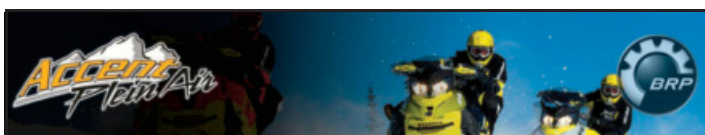
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Abel Icebound attacked by dog

Dog mauling wounds Waswanipi boy

Mauled by a dog at a playground November 16, an 11-year-old Waswanipi boy needed 11 stitches to close gruesome wounds to his face.

Abel Icebound told media he didn't provoke the dog but was simply enjoying the park's slide and swings when

he was attacked. His father, Michel Icebound, found him crying and quickly rushed him to the Waswanipi clinic.

Since 2013, a community bylaw states that pet owners must keep tabs on their animals. Yet, packs of stray dogs roaming at will is a familiar sight for those living in James Bay territory. According to Michel Icebound, there are too many dogs in the communities and a lot of owners "don't really care for their dogs."

Waswanipi Deputy Chief Mandy Gull said she is taking the issue very seriously, informing community members they had 48 hours to tie up their dogs and anyone failing to do so would have their animal dealt with by animal control.

Gull says she will be looking outside of Waswanipi to help deal with stray animals, suggesting that she may bring in a pet rescue organization. She also noted that local residents must do their part to control stray dogs.

Companies join to explore virtual worlds

Rezolution Pictures and Minority Games are joining forces to create a cutting-edge virtual reality company dubbed MinorityVR. The new endeavour combines the resources of an award-winning production company with the expertise of a cutting-edge video game studio.

MinorityVR will provide broadcasters with virtual reality (VR) experiences to complement existing scripted and factual series, as well as its own original TV content with second screen VR experiences. They will also be collaborating with the medical and aviation industries to develop VR content that explores surgical training, pain management and treatments for PTSD.

A pioneer in this area of the gaming industry, Minority

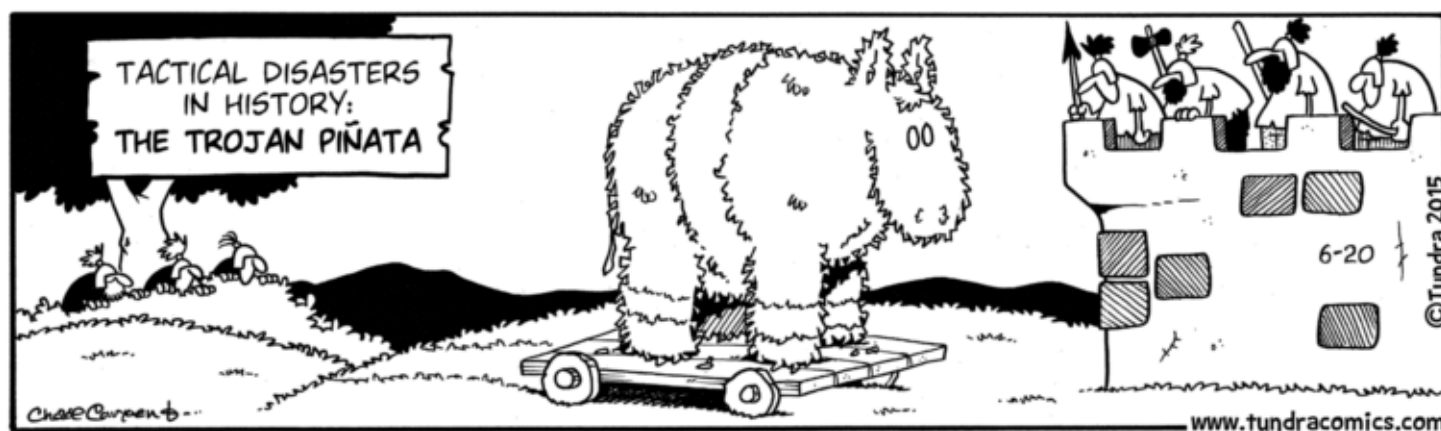
Media has already been working with VR and VR interactivity for over three years.

"VR is a game-changing technology," said MinorityVR co-founder and Senior VP Isabelle Anouk Bourduas. "It will open up new distribution platforms that appeal directly to Millennials, a market all broadcasters are keen to develop."

MinorityVR just finished shooting for A&E Networks' very first VR experience, one that will be launched in tandem with the release of the Samsung Gear VR portable headset that links up with Samsung smartphones.

On November 15-17, they showed off the award-winning reality game Time Machine VR at the Montreal International Game Summit, giving attendees the chance to travel back in time and interact with lifelike dinosaurs.

For more info check out www.minorityvr.com.



Celebrating 40 Years

Four decades after the signing of the JBNQA, the Cree still protect their land

by Will Nicholls



This year marks the 40 anniversary of the signing of the James Bay and Northern Quebec Agreement (JBNQA). According to Grand Chief Matthew Coon Come the moment is an important milestone and a time for reflection.

"In celebrating the 40th anniversary of the JBNQA we have looked both backwards, to

remind ourselves of just how far we have come and just how much we have accomplished, and also, we have looked forward to see future horizons, to set new challenges for ourselves to advance our nation-building agenda, and to address areas where we may need to take some corrective actions," Coon Come told a gathering at Mistissini's community centre to mark the anniversary on November 11.



“

A lot of damage will be done in our land, such as the fish dying and water pollution. About 15 years ago, I remember the time when my brother and his family died of starvation and the same thing will happen again.

CHIEF MATTHEW SHANUSH, EASTMAIN

”



Chief Robert Kanatewat signs the petition

Then-Premier Robert Bourassa announced the construction of the La Grande Hydroelectric Complex on April 30, 1971 – without notifying the Cree who lived in the territory. At that time, there was no Grand Council of the Cree. In fact there had never even been a meeting of all the Cree chiefs on Northern Quebec.

It wasn't until June 29, 1971, that 28 Cree (councillors, chiefs and youth) from seven communities arrived and met in Mistissini to discuss what to do. At that time electricity, road access and even running water were relatively new. Most Cree communities didn't even have these basic services.

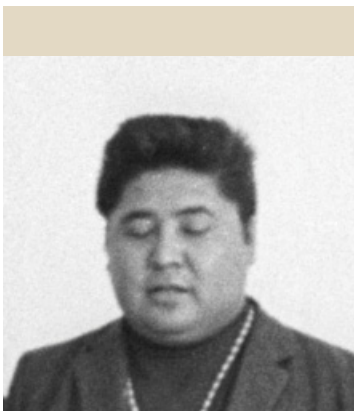
The concerns were many: rising water levels that would flood hundreds of square kilometres



of productive land; dead zones created by drastically changing water levels in response to electricity demands from southern communities in Canada and the United States; mudflats that would hinder animals' access to water; water pollution and skyrocketing mercury contamination levels.

The Cree were determined to fight the project and were assisted by numerous people such as Harvey Feit, Ignatius La Rusic and James O'Reilly, among others. The Grand Council of the Cree first met at the Pal's Hotel in Val-d'Or. On October 16, 1974, Chief Billy Diamond was elected the Grand Chief by a vote of 9-7, Chief Robert Kanatewat was elected as Deputy Grand Chief (10-6) and Abel Kitchen became the Executive Chief with a vote of 11-5. Violet Pachano was the recording Secretary at the time.

Crucial to the Cree position was the lawsuit heard by Quebec Superior Court Judge Albert Malouf. After seven months of testimony he granted an injunction to halt construction in 1974. A week later the decision was overturned on appeal. However, the Malouf judgement confirmed Quebec's legal obligation to negotiate a treaty covering the territory, even as construction proceeded.



“ We have already being asked not to eat fish, beaver and other foods from the water. We can't catch fish now, and greater parts of the hunting grounds will be flooded. The cemetery north of the village will be underwater. No human wants their mom or dad or child to be underwater when they were buried on dry land. Some of the people have been sent to Montreal because of polluted water, and sickness and also blood tests have been taken.

CHIEF PETER GULL, WASWANIPi ”



Leaving the meeting on July 1, 1971

Negotiations began to create the JBNQA, the first modern treaty in Canada. While the desire of the Cree to keep the land pristine would die, the leaders were determined to get as much as they could for their people.

"The land remains, and will always remain, the central characteristic and the anchor of who we are as a people," Coon Come told guests in Mistissini. "Everything in Eeyou-Eenou Istchee derives from that connection. Some people call that connection 'fundamental' – some call it

'foundational' and some call it 'sacred'. Whatever we call it, it is that connection which defines us and which guides us as we imagine the kind of future we want for our future generations."

Since the signing of the James Bay and Northern Quebec Agreement, Coon Come added, the Cree challenge has been to find a delicate balance between protection of the environment to preserve a traditional way of life and the development of natural resources for the use and benefit of Crees and their communities.

“



The water from the lake on our reserve is very salty and we get most our drinking water from the land, which isn't salty. In winter, some saltwater comes from the Bay and cannot be drunk for a couple of days or so, therefore where are we supposed to get our drinking water? Fish, beaver and other wildlife would be also affected. There is already lots of salty water coming inland around the James Bay Coast.

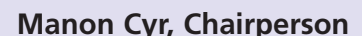
JOSIE SAM, FORT GEORGE

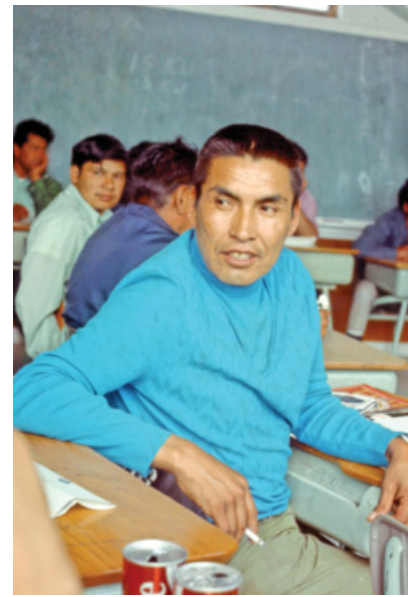
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On behalf of the Council members, the Eeyou Istchee James Bay Regional Government wishes to congratulate the Cree Nation on the 40th Anniversary of the signing of the James Bay and Northern Quebec Agreement.

Au nom des membres du conseil, le Gouvernement régional d'Eeyou Istchee Baie-James tient à féliciter la Nation Crie pour le 40e anniversaire de la signature de la Convention de la Baie-James et du Nord québécois.





“This is really what sustainable development is all about,” he said.

Since then, the changes have been many. “Even someone as young as I am,” Coon Come joked, “can remember using a yoke to get water, an axe to chop wood for the stove so we could make a meal, using an out-house and being one of the lucky

ones who had access to an out-board motor. A 25 horsepower was king in those days. Perishables like fish and other country food were shared freely as it would go bad without refrigeration.”

Even those who are not full-time trappers still hunt, fish and gather the bounty of the land. In fact, concerns over the environ-

mental, cultural and spiritual effects of the La Grande project led to the terms of the JBNQA. If the land could not be adequately protected from the La Grande project then how could we protect our way of life from the dominant culture? And in the end, how would we regain control over our future as a people?



“

About 60 trappers at least trap around Rupert’s House. All wildlife, even rabbits, will be dead. We have food coming in to our reserve once a week and it is usually all gone in one day. In the meantime, while we are waiting for more food to come what are we going live on? Long ago, my hunting grounds had lots of beaver because sometimes about 10 men (with a quota of 60 beavers each) used to hunt in my grounds during the winter. They managed to survive on this even before welfare was ever issued to them.

MALCOLM DIAMOND, RUPERT’S HOUSE

”

“

We need to believe that we can carry our own weight in all areas of the life of the Cree Nation and we need to act on that belief, for no other reason than it is true.

GRAND CHIEF MATTHEW COON COME

”



Sam Gull , George Jolly, Rev. John Gull, Jimmy Maincum, Freddy Gull, Malcolm Diamond, Edawrd Gilpin Sr, Diom Shecapio, Simeon Petawabano, Abraham Weapenicappo, Joseph Pepabino, Noah Eagle , Matthew Shanush, Norman Icebound, Harry Blacksmith, Billy Diamond , Alan Jolly, ----, Josie Sam, Louise Shecapio, Philip Awashish, Smally Petawabano, Fred Blackned, Max Gros-Louis, ----, John Mark, Daisy Longchamp-Metabie, Noah Sheshamush, David Sandy, Edna Neeposh, Sinclair Matches, Peter Gull, Ann Marie Awashish, Robert Kanatweat, Emelie Gull



“As a result of the struggles and the achievements which we have realized, we have established effective local and regional governments,” Coon Come observed. “It is through these governance institutions that we have made ourselves the decision-makers in striking that balance between the traditional way of life and involvement in a modern economy.”

It is this political advancement that made it possible to gain a great deal of control over economic development in Cree territory, he emphasized.

“If governance structures were not aligned with the rights of our people, if governance structures were not aligned with the demographic realities of our region, then there would have been a serious danger that the economic development within our



“

We will also affected to a great extent but I would like to tell you that most of what we live from is half from the land and half from the Bay here. Most of the beaver trapped are around this area because Nitchequon has mostly otter and other types of fur. Our welfare program will likely go up because we can't live off the land.

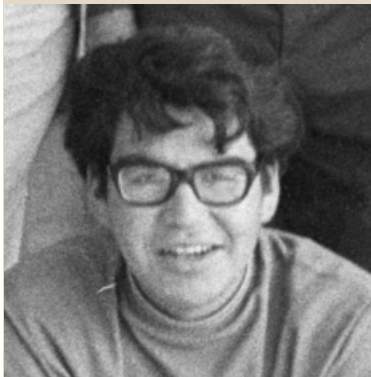
CHIEF SMALLY PETAWABANO,
MISTASSINI

”



traditional territory could be carried out without our consent and without benefit to our communities. But we made this connection fundamental to so many of our struggles so that now there can be no development of any kind within Eeyou-Eenou Istchee which has not met our standards of social acceptability.”

While the latest example of this is the denial of permits for Strateco to mine uranium, the best example is Hydro-Québec's Great Whale Project. It was eventually shelved in 1994 due to the determination of the Cree people as a whole. That struggle demonstrated that the Cree were a political force to be reckoned with.



“ We have been informed that there will be lots of employment during this project. If there is a dam near the reserve, take an example of Dawson Creek, B.C., there will be the white man to come in near the dam, set up a town and take over education, job opportunities and language. Indians will have no job, go to town and drink, will not be accepted by the white town, unwed mothers and just be treated like a dog by the whites.

CHIEF BILLY DIAMOND, RUPERT'S HOUSE ”



However, even 40 years after the JBNQA agreement, Cree leaders in Quebec must still deal with myths about Aboriginal peoples.

“We in Eeyou-Eenou Istchee have dispelled the persistent myth in Canada that Indigenous peoples represent an obstacle to development,” Coon Come noted. “According to this myth whenever there is a possibility to develop resources and where there is a claim involving Indigenous traditional territories, our peoples will create legal and political impedi-

ments to such development projects. The myth implies that Indigenous peoples do not really wish to be participants in the mainstream economy.

“Unfortunately, the perpetuation of this myth has prevented natural resources and economic development within Indigenous territories from transitioning towards a model that includes our participation and that acknowledges our rights. For Canada as a whole, the perpetuation of this myth has resulted in sadly missed

opportunities to resolve longstanding disputes between First Nations and the Crown.”

Coon Come added there is another myth that affects the Cree Nation. “That is the myth that we cannot make it as business people or as enterprises unless we have hand-outs, or unless we receive special treatment... We need to believe that we can carry our own weight in all areas of the life of the Cree Nation and we need to act on that belief, for no other reason than it is true.”

Band-aid solutions

The Grand Chief critiques Quebec's response to the Val-d'Or crisis

by Jesse Staniforth

A month has passed since the Radio-Canada program *Enquête* aired stunning allegations of abuse by SQ officers against Aboriginal women in Val-d'Or. Though the initial upheaval has passed, discussions about the matter among politicians are continuing. As this issue of *the Nation* goes to press, the Chiefs of the Assembly of First Nations of Quebec and Labrador (AFNQL) were meeting in Odanak to follow up on a November 4 meeting with Premier Philippe Couillard.

Measures announced then included \$6.1-million in government funding for the Val-d'Or Native Friendship Centre, Willie's Place and the Kinawit land-based healing program. The premier also ordered that SQ patrol cars in the community of Val-d'Or have cameras installed, and that "social workers will be made available to offer professional support to police officers" at the Val-d'Or detachment.

A three-party "working platform" consisting of AFNQL leaders and Quebec and federal government officials, and federal government representatives was also established to examine Quebec police practices, with particular attention to relations with Indigenous people. The goal of this partnership is to increase trust between Indigenous people and Quebec police officers, as well as improv-

ing response to violence against Aboriginal women and girls.

Finally, Couillard appointed Université Laval Professor Fannie Lafontaine as an independent overseer of the Montreal police investigation of the eight SQ officers facing allegations.

Reflecting on the meeting, however, Grand Chief Matthew Coon Come underlined that dis-

lies of disappeared women, social workers on the ground, the more the demand for justice is loud and clear," he said.

The Grand Chief applauded Couillard's willingness to participate in a national inquiry into missing and murdered Aboriginal women. However, he took issue with Couillard's demand that the province wait to receive the

**"Those who are battered, sexually assaulted,
taken for a starlight tour in the dead of winter
– who will speak for them if they are not
missing or murdered?"**

cussions of politics should not divert public attention from the experiences of the alleged victims.

"We must remember and keep our focus on the women who are at the centre of this crisis and allow for the investigation of these cases to move forward," he told *the Nation*. "There is a duty to bring justice to these women who bravely came forward with their story."

For that reason, Coon Come said, he joined in the call for a provincial inquiry into the allegations against the SQ. "The more you speak with other Chiefs, fami-

results of that inquiry before considering its own inquiry into alleged police abuses.

"The national inquiry will be focused on the missing and murdered women," Coon Come said. "What about the Indigenous women, and men, who suffer injustices at the hands of those who have taken oath to protect them? Those who are battered, sexually assaulted, taken for a starlight tour in the dead of winter – who will speak for them if they are not missing or murdered?"

Ontario and Manitoba, Coon Come reasoned, responded to

allegations of police abuse with provincial judicial inquiries of their own.

"These provinces understood that a serious examination of the relationship between the province's authorities and First Nations people was crucial to building better relationships," he said. "Quebec should not wait to have a Neil Stonechild case of its own before it takes this difficult reality seriously."

The funding boost for Willie's Place and the Kinawât project, as well the Kitajé social housing project and other resource for psychological, medical, and judicial services for women in need was, Coon Come said, the product of the gov-

ernment being "quick to apply a financial gauze to the wound."

In order to make Val-d'Or and the rest of the province a safer place for Aboriginal women and Natives, however, a deeper understanding is urgently required.

"What happened in Val-d'Or could have happened to any town with similar demographics," Coon Come stated. "Municipalities and provinces have to make the effort to self-examine their relationship with First Nations people. How and why was a situation, like the one we are now reeling from in Val-d'Or, allowed to go on for so long? How is it possible that nobody, be it at the municipal or provincial levels, felt it necessary to seriously explore

the allegations brought to light in May by the women who came forward during the filming of Enquête's investigative program?"

The Grand Chief closed by reminding the Cree Nation that this story began with the disappearance of Washaw-Sibi's Sindy Ruperthouse, who has now been missing for over 18 months.

"Until Quebec can answer these questions we shall continue to pursue the provincial judicial inquiry," he said. "In the meantime, we will continue working with Quebec as we always have, but there are many questions that will remain unanswered if we continue applying the same solutions. There is a cycle of violence that must be broken."

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Electrifying growth

Award-winning Native electrician sets up in Eeyou Istchee

by Jesse Staniforth

Fort Albany's Glen P. Sutherland is like an electrical gunslinger, making the east coast of James Bay safe for Native customers to get their homes, businesses and communities wired up without getting ripped off. And he's coming soon to sort out Eeyou Istchee.

What sets him apart from other electrical contractors?

"Well, I'm Cree!" he said. "A lot of non-Natives take advantage of our people. I see how much they charge, and I think, 'My god, this is crazy!'"

Sutherland began his electrical work 17 years ago as an apprentice and eventually became a foreman. In December 2012, he received his electrical contractor licence and began operating GPS Electrical in the west James Bay communities of Fort Albany, Attawapiskat, Kashechewan and Moose Factory. From the time he began, he said, he was aware of the lack of Native electrical contractors in the area and the overcharging of Cree customers.

"There was no competition," he explained. "The ones charging too much were the only people with the

qualifications, and they knew that. So they figured they could charge as much as they wanted. It was insane."

That was something Sutherland was happy to change by bringing affordable services to Native communities.

"I came around a couple of years ago, and you don't see those contractors anymore - you know what I mean?" he laughed. "I've found that people love it when they see their own people as contractors. You don't have to depend on white people."

For coupling that initiative with a high quality of service, the Nishnawbe Aski Nation named Sutherland Businessman of the Year at its 25th annual Nishnawbe Aski Development Fund Business Awards in Thunder Bay on October 29.

As Nishnawbe Aski Chief Alvin Fiddler told the audience at the NADF Awards Gala, "I am inspired by the skill, determination and enthusiasm these [business] leaders have displayed while advancing economic development and business opportunities

What sets him apart
from other electrical contractors?

"Well, I'm Cree! A lot of non-Natives
take advantage of our people. I see
how much they charge, and I think,
'My god, this is crazy!'"



Glen Sutherland and his wife Jennifer

that are building capacity for our First Nations and improving the quality of life for our people.”

Though Sutherland is west-coast born and raised and is currently in North Bay while his wife Jennifer finishes her education at Nipissing University, the family plans on moving this year and bringing his services to Eeyou Istchee. At present, he is filing his paperwork and writing exams for certification in Quebec, and he expects to have GPS Electrical up and running on the east coast of James Bay by early winter.

The services of an electrical contractor include all aspects involved in bringing power into buildings, Sutherland said, from houses to commercial and industrial wiring.

“I do service upgrades, panels – a lot of people are converting to electric heat in their homes now, so they need more power,” he said. “I install electric heating systems in their houses too. In commercial, I do garages and fire-halls – places that need bigger services. But I do offices as well. I can wire up a whole building, new construction or renovation. And I do fire-alarm systems for commercial build-

ings. I also install back-up generators for commercial and residential settings.”

Sutherland said the electrical grid on the west coast is similar to that of many communities in Eeyou Istchee: prone to interruptions.

“All year round, we can sometimes lose one or two days’ power,” he said. “We try to provide power for essential buildings, such as hospitals. In every community, there’s a main building, such as a community hall, that can be used as an emergency building where they can provide food or warm shelter for people who don’t have wood stoves.”

All this, Sutherland underlines, contributes to an understanding of what customers in the Cree Nation will need from him. But another thing he understands, he said, is that Native communities need Native businesses, and he’s doing his part to help encourage that.

“I’ve trained the youth. I have two apprentices, one guy who’s almost licensed [as a Master Electrician] now,” he said. “I just want to keep training our people. I hope that they open their own companies so that we have more Native contractors.”

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For everyone on your list

A look at what is hot for the cold season

by Amy German

With the holiday season jingling bells and cash registers throughout Eeyou Istchee, many are scouring the Internet in search of the perfect gift or planning a trip south to fill up their Santa sacks.

The challenge can be finding the time to get it all and getting it all right.

This is why we at *the Nation* scoured the malls and the Web to find out what's hot this season for the tech fan, glamorous gal, happy hunter, home renovator, foodie, fitness fanatic, sports fan or folks who just want to cuddle on a cold winter's night.

For the tech lover

For the guy or gal who loves keeping up with the trends when it comes to the device market, there's little doubt that this season's hottest item is Apple's new iPad Pro.

The iPad Pro boasts an expansive 12.9-inch Retina display, refined Multi Touch technology and nearly double the CPU performance of iPad Air 2. This lighter, faster upgrade features all sorts of goodies like Apple Pencil and better capabilities than any other tablet out there. The hefty sticker price, which starts at \$1,049 for the 32GB version, comes as no surprise to those in the know.

www.apple.com/ca/shop/buy-ipad/ipad-pro

Cropping up more and more in the communities these days, drones are becoming the ultimate toy as they have phenomenal maneuverability, come

with increasingly powerful camera capabilities and allow for stunning aerial perspectives.

Because of their popularity, drones now come in just about every price range. If you are on the market for a drone for the kids to fly around outside, the Parrot Airborne Cargo Drone Mars MiniDrone with Camera retails for about \$139.99



iPad Pro





Own a drone!

and comes out of the package ready to operate. Available at Best Buy, this gadget is ideal for the first drone experience and won't break the bank if it gets stuck in a tree.

For a high-tech, professional experience, the 3DR Solo Smart Drone offers stunning and simple aerial photography with full GoPro control and live video streaming from your GoPro straight to your smartphone or tablet at a range of up to 800 metres.

Retailing at \$1,299.99, this drone is great for checking out where that caribou herd is headed, taking spectacular landscape footage, or filming your outdoor adventures.

www.bestbuy.ca/

For the techies who have everything and keep their life in their devices, one way to get a bright and cheery Christmas morning smile is to find a Caseable product under the tree. These custom-made covers, sleeves and pouches not only offer spectacular protection for the device they are covering but are also completely customizable to feature a selected design offered by Caseable or comprised of the images of your choosing.

Featuring all kinds of beautiful and brilliant soft laptop covers for anything from your 11-12' laptop, all the way to a MacBook Pro 17 or MacBook Air 13, these cases are durable, practical and design savvy.

www.caseable.com/

For the gal who likes to pamper herself

One of the best parts of holiday shopping is that cosmetics companies offer all kinds of exclusive product add-ons, colours unavailable other times of the year and generous gift sets.

For the budding makeup artist or the lady who wants to up her game, this Sephora Collection Tools of the Trade brush set is great value. Retailing at \$74, it features a collection of eight brushes for the eyes, cheeks and complexion that would normally run for about \$190.

www.sephora.com/tools-of-the-trade-brush-set-P379559?skuld=1508928



Handmade by Nunavik Creations

For a big-ticket item that will keep her warm, last for years and make her the envy of all of the other ladies around the community, look no further than Nunavik Creations for a gorgeous pair of sealskin mitts or Pirurtuliik.

Handmade by Inuit women in Nunavik, these traditional sealskin mitts come in a various colours with a variety of different trims, including natural harp seal with silver fur, red harp seal with red finn raccoon, red harp seal with black fox, black harp seal with blue frost fox and navy harp seal with navy finn raccoon.

While they may seem a little pricey at \$349, these luxurious mitts will last for years and are of unparalleled beauty!


www.nunavikcreations.com/en/project/product/view_/29/pirurtuliik

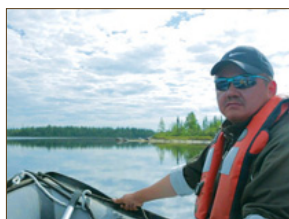
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The contest runs from October 2, 2015, through December 3, 2015, and is open to members of the Cree nation living in one of the Native communities of Eeyou Istchee who are at least 18 years of age. Limit of one entry per person per day. The winner will be announced at 8:00 a.m. on December 9, 2015, during the Hydlo and Friends radio show on JBCCS.

If your lady is the type who can't get enough purses and is a fan of the beaded jewelry look, Mohawk designer Tammy Beauvais has created a stylish purse that is beautifully ornate and the perfect accessory to take along the powwow trail. Roomy and eye-catching, this purse measures 12"x7"x9" and can fit all the usual gear a gal needs throughout her day. It retails for about \$80.

<http://tammybeauvais.com/product/bead-work-floral-print-purse>



Stylish purse by Mohawk designer Tammy Beauvais

Of course, if your lady loves to accessorize and is a fan of the Haida designs that adorn so many of Dorothy Grant's creations, her killer-whale shawl makes for a lovely gift. Available in both blue and red, this shawl is made from a jacquard woven 50-50 silk/wool blend so it's both warm enough that it can be worn on a cool summer evening or cool enough to dress up a suit or sweater. Running for \$150, it is available exclusively on Grant's website.

<http://dorothygrant.com/product/killer-whale-shawl>



Dorothy Grant's killer-whale shawl

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For the hunter

If your man is in need of a new skinning knife, this Mossberg Fixed Skinning Knife makes for a lovely stocking stuffer. Quality made and only \$20.67, this 6.5" knife is handy to have around the camp and great for getting the job done.

www.amazon.ca

Protect that gun, whether it's a rifle or a shotgun, with Cabela's Armour Xtreme Moulded Single Long-Gun Hard Case. It's waterproof and dustproof for a single-scoped rifle or shotgun. You can padlock it for extra safety. At \$99.99, it comes with a lifetime warranty and meets airline requirements.

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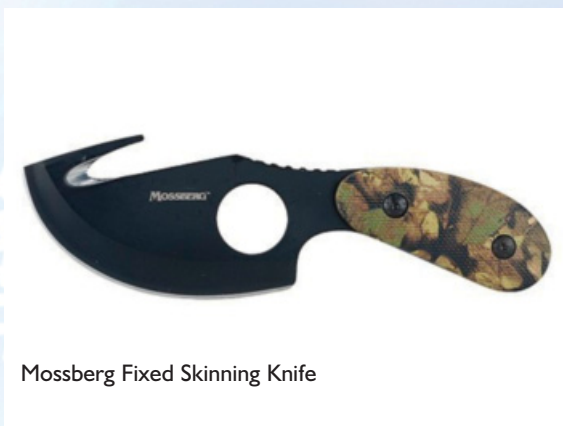
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Mossberg Fixed Skinning Knife

The Remington Model 783 Bolt Action Rifle is a fine firearm for beginners. It comes with a scope and a redesigned stock for easier handling. It comes in .22-250, .233, .243, .270, .300 magnum, .30-06, .308 and 7mm magnum. The CrossFire trigger system allows you to adjust the trigger from 2.5 lbs to 5 lbs of pressure. Hunters who have reviewed this rifle are glowing about its capabilities and highly recommend it. And it's only \$399.99.

www.cabelas.ca

For Mr (or Ms) Fix-It

If there's nothing more fun than getting power tools, a brand-new drill is a great way to go! And, if you are looking for a sure bet purchase, this Mastercraft 20V Max Lithium-Ion Hammer Drill has been tested numerous times by Canadian Tire to make sure that it can stand up to a workout!

This drill features a 1/2" keyless chuck and 375 lbs. of torque, a forward and reverse LED indicator and a built-in work light and on-board bit storage. Retailing for \$142.49, this drill is a great buy.

www.canadiantire.ca/en/pdp/mastercraft-20v-max-lithium-ion-hammer-drill-0543122p.html#pd-footer

If a loved one is gearing up for a career in the construction industry, check out this 24-inch handheld aluminum toolbox at Home Depot. Featuring a removable plastic tray and two clasps for locking and a bright diamond-plated exterior, this well-made and durable toolbox runs for a cool \$89.36.

www.homedepot.ca/en/home/p.24--inch-handheld-tool-box-aluminum.1000747565.html

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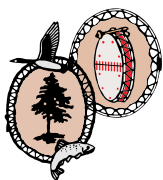
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ASSISTANT EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR
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Cuisinart CGR-4NC 5-in-1 Griddler

Carving tools make a wonderful gift as this hobby can melt away the hours over a long, winter and make for some beautiful results. Beginners would do well with this starter set from Omer DeSerres. It's priced at \$33.19 for 10 different carving knives to get a budding woodcarver started.

www.deserres.ca/en-ca/search/10-knives-for-wood-carving/1523

For the foodie

This all-in-one blender/chopper from Cuisinart is the perfect gift, a whiz at blending soups and chopping veggies and ideal for making smoothies. Featuring a 350-watt motor, this powerful kitchen gem features a special digital compact base with high/low and pulse settings. It's also illuminated, gives you one-touch control for any job and comes with four BPA free 16-oz or 473 ml travel cups to take your nutritious concoction out the door with you as a breakfast-on-the-go or a lunch-in-the-bush. Retailing at \$69.99, this versatile blender/chopper is ideal for the budding or seasoned chef.

www.canadiantire.ca/en/pdp/cuisinart-blender-chopper-15-pc-0430272p.html#.VkysntKrQsY

For a stocking stuffer that will produce a good giggle, this Fairly Odd Novelties Southern Homewares AK47 Gun Ice Cube Tray should pretty much do it. This tray makes gun-shaped ice cubes that are ideal for cocktails or for when you want to arm a small frozen army. It retails at \$14.93.

www.amazon.ca

If your cook is in need of a new toy that can both griddle and grill, this Cuisinart CGR-4NC 5-in-1 Griddler promises to be a lot of fun. Featuring a contact grill, panini press, flat grill and griddle with removable, nonstick grill and griddle plates that are reversible, this Griddler features cooking plates that drain grease for healthier cooking. Made of brushed stainless steel, this item comes with drip cups, a cleaning/scraping tool and an instruction and recipe book. At \$99.99, this item is guaranteed to be the talk of Christmas morning.

www.amazon.ca

For the fitness fanatic

Looking to get fit or become the fastest runner in town, the Fitbit Surge Smartwatch is the best-rated activity tracker of its kind and has all sorts of interesting features, such as built-in GPS and automatic, continuous heart-rate monitoring. The perfect tech tool to get real-time statistics on your workout, it monitors pace, distance, calories burned, heart-rate intensity, and target zones to make the most of your training. Since it can track your all-day stats for added health insights, this piece of gear helps the user to compete against their best performances. Retailing at \$300.24, this gadget combines all of the latest technology and sleek style in models for both men and women.

www.bestbuy.ca

For the fitness fan who is just starting out or looking to heal an injury, the NeeBooFit Resistance Loop Band Set: Best Fitness Exercise Bands makes for a great gift as this full set of six comes with a variety of different resistance level bands. Ideal for a home workout, these resistance bands can take the place of dumbbells. Fun, colourful and easy to use, they come with their own carry bag and exercise booklet, and are guaranteed for life.

www.amazon.ca



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PLEASE NOTE THAT ONLY CANDIDATES QUALIFIED FOR THE POSITIONS LISTED ABOVE WILL BE SEEN DURING THE EVENT.

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The job description for each position is available at:
www.stornowaydiamonds.com/English/careers/opportunities

Reference and background checks will
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www.stornowaydiamonds.com





Over-the-top head-to-toe onesie

For your favourite sports fan

What better way to cuddle up on game night than this over-the-top head-to-toe onesie for the Habs hockey fan? What better way to show your love of the game than with this gigantic, warm and cuddly one-piece pajama set? Ideal for lounging, viewing or sleeping, this \$113.95 outfit could be worn as an extra layer to keep warm and piss off Bruins and Leafs fans.

www.canadiensboutique.com/Montreal_Canadiens_NHL_Adult_Onesie__H/p284454_14552080.aspx

If you are going to buy one for daddy, you may as well get one for baby too so that you can deck out the whole family in onesies. This Montreal Canadiens baby sleeper is the perfect gift to put your budding baby hockey fan down in and is perfect to soothe your infant to sleep. Retail for \$36.79.

www.canadiensboutique.com/Montreal_Canadiens_Reebok_kids_sleeper/p284454_13317094.aspx

Both of the aforementioned items can be ordered with logos featuring other teams – if you dare.

But, if you are shopping for someone you hate, you may want to consider this appropriately named “Toronto Maple Leafs Blue Patches Ugly Sweater.” Ideal for the fan of ugly sweaters and the Leafs, this garish garment retails for \$69.95, is made from 100% acrylic and is perfect to wear to an ugly sweater party. An item like this can surprisingly get a lot of wear, if not so many compliments.

www.fansedge.com/Toronto_Maple_Leafs_Merchandise/Toronto_Maple_Leafs_Blue_Patches_Ugly_Sweater



Hunter rocks the A-2 Bomber jacket

A final suggestion for the kids

If your little guy or gal fantasizes about playing dress up in military gear and could use a new spring coat, these Up and Away jackets are quality made and feature military, science profession or race designs so that your little guys can wear their own A-2 Bomber jacket or even space shuttle gear. Ideal for the kid who wants to become a fighter pilot, paleontologist, astronaut, or pursue any kind of military career, these coats are durable for spring/summer/fall outdoor play and encourages them to dream.

www.upandawayjackets.com



One night in Paris

by Xavier Kataquapit

My night in Paris started with my friend and I getting a bit lost on Boulevard Henri IV while looking for the Bastille. From our pause on the corner we were looking at a map in the middle of the hustle and bustle of Parisians making their way along the busy street at the end of the day. All of a sudden a hand reached up out of the crowd of passersby and touched my shoulder. I turned and came face to face with a very old gentleman who looked a little like Peter O'Toole and he asked in perfect Londoner English, "Can I be of some service? You two seem quite lost."

He introduced himself as Monsieur Mada and provided us with a short history of the area we had wandered into. He said he was intrigued to meet a real Canadian Aboriginal. After a lengthy conversation, which was more like a history lesson, the fragile, yet still bright and vivid man with a cane invited us to see "a real Parisian apartment." How could we refuse?

His apartment was nearby in one of the historic buildings that lined the street. On the fourth floor we made our way down a marble corridor, where we were greeted by a burly young black man with a bush of frizzy hair. Monsieur Mada addressed him as Edmund his assistant and introduced us as his new Canadian friends. We were soon seated in a very elegant and large living room sipping on orange juice.

Monsieur Mada, who informed us he was 80 years of age, told us his story there in the dim lamp-lit room that featured a wall of books and soft old leather couches. He took us on a tour of his home, revealing his life story as we walked about.

His mother was a renowned Algerian dancer who had fallen in love with his father, a World War II fighter pilot who later became a commercial aviator. We saw images of his parents in black-and-white photos. Many were of a beautiful young Algerian woman in a flowing robe and several of his father in military uniform. He spoke slowly and softly about his career in government and the military, only to say, "I was always employed in the service of NATO. That was long ago now and honestly, I have some very difficult memories of that time. It was after the war and there was a lot going on. Some of the things I had to do, I am not proud of so I prefer to leave it there."

As if to clear the air he invited us out to dinner at his favourite restaurant. "We will go down the block to visit the Fat Lady," he said, beaming with a mischievous smile. Edmund encouraged us to head to the bar and let us know that Monsieur Mada had a running tab there so not to think about the cost. Actually, we decided the night was on us and that was an expensive decision.

It was a short walk down Boulevard Henri IV to the small restaurant bar called La Cavetière. The lights inside were warm and inviting. A young man was playing a piano, people were dancing and the space was filled with music, chatter and laughter. The walls were adorned with autographed framed photos of many of the artists, musicians and actors of France. As we shuffled between chairs, tables and people, a haze of cigarette smoke hung around us like fog. The place was already full in the early evening.

A woman shouted, "Monsieur Mada! Monsieur Mada!" A big, blonde lady raced up to Monsieur Mada and devoured him in a hug with excited

words in French. We were introduced to the Fat Lady and ushered to a table at the back of the bar where we could see everyone. We ate an amazing meal of roasted lamb in a rich sauce. As the night rolled on, the crowd swelled and the piano player sang his heart out in well-known French tunes and American hits.

After a few hours we could see that Monsieur Mada had lost his perkiness and seemed to grow droopy and tired. We suggested getting him back to his apartment and calling it a night. I think he was thankful for that offer.

On the way out the piano player was tinkling the ivories and belting out one of my favourite tunes, "Just A Gigolo." The crowd was pressing and Monsieur Mada led us in a line parting the dancing Parisians. Midway through the place a beautiful young woman turned and reached for Monsieur Mada's hand. He took her hand and danced with her under the glow of the soft warm yellow lights and the haze of cigarette smoke. His face lit up as he ushered up the energy to spin her around and move gracefully on the floor. They embraced for an instant and then we continued on our way to the front door.

Back on the street we made our way to his apartment. We left him and Edmund with promises of a return visit after exchanging addresses. On leaving the impressive old building and returning to the Parisian night we were surprised by the sound of a party horn. We looked up and there was Monsieur Mada on his balcony, waving adieu, adorned in a party hat and blowing on one of those silly party horns.

All my love and condolences to the people of Paris in this tragic time with the memories of Monsieur Mada and my night in Paris.



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